CORPORATE
INVOLVEMENT
IN EDUCATION

AMERICA'S TECHNOLOGY CHALLENGE

technology

"Every classroom will be

connected to the Internet

by the year 2000 and

all students will be

technologically literate."

The Seven Priorities of the U.S. Department of Education

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

technology

Technology—the World Wide Web, e-commerce, computer-aided design, word processing, data processing, electronic transfers—has become an engine of our economic growth and has fundamentally changed the ways we learn, how we do business, and the skills students in America need to flourish in the world of work. Sustaining profits in the new economy of technological sophistication and increased global competition means that businesses need highly skilled and well-educated workers. Businesses are now major stakeholders in the educational success of our children.

States, communities, businesses, families and teachers need to ensure that every classroom in America is helping students connect to the information age through high-quality computers, creative software, and well-trained teachers. Businesses—large and small—need to be able to depend upon a highly educated, technologically literate workforce. By investing today in our children's education, businesses are investing in their long-term success.

The U.S. Department of Education has a number of initiatives designed to encourage the participation of businesses in education programs that use technology and help America's schools bridge the digital divide.

Technology Innovation Challenge Grants

The Technology Innovation Challenge Grant Program serves as a catalyst for positive change in schools. Challenge Grant communities work to integrate new technologies into state or local education improvement efforts that have been stimulated by a growing national commitment to raise education standards. Effective use of new technologies in these communities will contribute to improved student achievement in reading, writing, science, mathematics, history, the arts and other disciplines. Each project will support effective training for teachers and promote greater parent and community involvement in education.

Community Technology Centers (CTCs)

Although the number of Americans connected to the nation's information infrastructure is soaring, a digital divide still exists, and in many cases, is actually widening over time. Promoting technological equity, Community Technology Centers provide access to information technology and related learning services to children and adults who would not otherwise have such access. CTCs incorporate technology to enhance educational activities in economically distressed areas, particularly in rural and urban communities. In addition to conducting a variety of technology-oriented projects, individuals can take advantage of valuable resources available for obtaining job skills and learning about employment opportunities.

"Technology is one part of a comprehensive quality learning experience that, at its very core, involves the concept of teaching people to think and to continue to learn throughout their lifetimes so that they can benefit from change."

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley

Learning Anytime Anywhere Partnerships (LAAP)

Many Americans want to improve their skills so they can compete for high-wage jobs but find it difficult to participate in traditional on-campus instruction and coursework. New technologies such as the Internet make it possible to provide access to learning anytime, anywhere. Such distance learning opportunities make it significantly easier for Americans who live in remote rural areas, have a disability, or have competing family and work demands to have access to individualized, up-to-date, affordable education and training. This partnership program will support shared efforts by colleges, universities, businesses, community organizations, or other entities to deliver quality postsecondary education. Such partnerships stimulate resource sharing, reduce program duplication, and promote economies of scale which benefit the entire community.

This initiative awards grants to partnerships involving two or more institutions of higher education, community organizations, businesses, and other public and private agencies and is designed to help students in underserved geographic areas who have limited access to a traditional college campus setting. LAAP grants may be used to develop:

- Model programs and software that will make distance learning possible;

- Innovative online student support services such as job placement, academic counseling, and library services;

- New institutional policies and practices that go beyond merely putting more courses online, but truly deliver programs that are self-paced alternatives to traditional semester scheduling; and

- Methods of assessing the quality and success of the new distance learning programs by charting skills and competencies achieved by students, as well as retention and completion rates.

Anytime, Anywhere Chemistry Experience
This enterprise, a partnership including the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, Colorado Electronic Community College, Addison Wesley Longman, Inc., and Eduprise.com, offers one solution to the problem of providing high-quality, hands-on, inquiry-based science laboratory experience for distance learners. The partners developed a hybrid laboratory curriculum that incorporates computer simulations and demonstrations into a home-based wet lab. Though embedded in a complete online introductory chemistry course, the curriculum is modular in nature and can be integrated into existing chemistry courses, both conventional and online.

The Louisiana Challenge, a fifth-year Technology Innovation Challenge Grant whose activities involve more than 50 organizations, including some national corporations, illustrates the fine work that can be accomplished through a robust partnership. Partners coordinate efforts and work to provide a specific service to a Challenge district: Shell Oil and Lockheed Martin have offered monetary support, use of facilities, and training to Jefferson Parish Schools; the Lafayette Cable Company gave consulting services for the installation and networking service at Lafayette Parish Schools; and, BellSouth provided funding for a telecommunications project.

The Central Arizona Community Technology Initiative (CACTI), with the assistance of the local Chamber of Commerce, Intel Corporation, and other business partners, established Community Technology Centers in three rural and Native American communities of Arizona. The centers serve at-risk children, the working poor, and those without access to computers. Instructional technology at the centers is used for academic enrichment, workforce development, and GED completion. In addition to these activities, students taking A+ certification classes upgrade donated computers and give them to families in need.

"Better Education Is Everybody's Business"

Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley

If you are interested in learning how your

business can be more involved with

technology programs, please contact the

Corporate Outreach Office at

(202) 205-8599 or visit our Web site:

www.ed.gov/OIIA/OIA.

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